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FS TODAY

2003 YEAR IN REVIEW

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Introduction

Welcome to FS Today's year in review. Each year, FS Today helps keep folks in the Forest Service up to date on the events and activities that shape our professional lives. The year 2003 resonated with exceptional events, which you will read about in these pages.

Several years ago, we began tackling some problems that had plagued us for years: process gridlock, partnership barriers, a financial system in disarray, and cost and safety issues in firefighting. In 2003, we made some good progress in a number of areas. You will find articles here on some of the ways we have found to get more work done on the ground through the Healthy Forests Initiative (HFI). You will read about how we are reforming our partnership authorities and putting our financial house in better order. You will see how we are trying to refocus the national debate on the major threats we face today—fire and fuels, invasive species, loss of open space, and unmanaged outdoor recreation.

We have made some progress, but we will need to make more. All the issues you will read about here will still face us in some manner in the years to come. To help us get where we are going, you must understand where we came from. There is no better place to start than here.

Dale N. Bosworth
Chief

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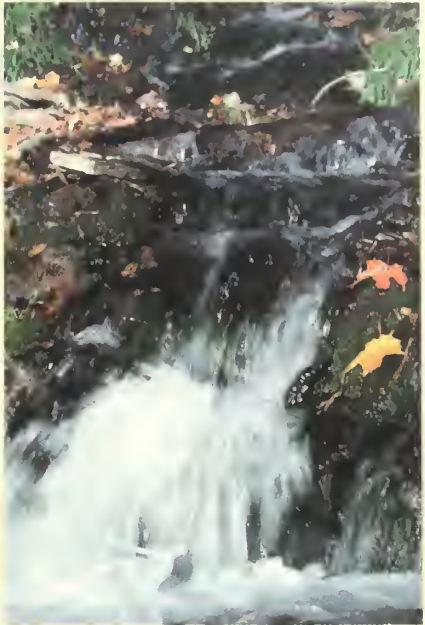
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Old Buildings Give New Hope for Needy Families

"See that lumber? That's some of our Nation's last remaining old growth timber. Wouldn't that look good in someone's home?" asks Bob Falk, research engineer at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service Forest Products Laboratory (FPL).

No, Falk is not wishfully thinking about logging old growth timber. In fact, what he is proposing will help conserve our forests while preventing about a billion board feet of lumber from going into landfills each year. The process he is referring to is called building deconstruction. Simply put, it involves carefully dismantling a building and using the salvageable parts, including lumber. It is labor intensive, but cuts down immensely on the volume of waste going into our Nation's landfills. And in most cases, it makes economic sense. The potential market for the salvaged lumber is large and includes structural reuse or remanufacturing as millwork, flooring, and trim.

In this case, Falk is describing an old barracks building at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, but it could be at virtually any military base in the United States. Thousands of wood buildings on active and closing military bases have served their purpose and are now slated for demolition. These World War II era buildings contain some of our Nation's last remaining old growth timber. Until now, much of that timber was going to landfills when buildings were pulled out of service.

Bill Bowman, Habitat for Humanity Deconstruction manager, says the sale of oak floorboards and joists from this building alone will raise about \$32,000. The money will be used to build homes for needy families.

According to Falk, the lumber deserves a better fate. "Much of this lumber is very high quality. Some of it is old growth, which is very desirable. It has few knots, tight growth rings, and high density. What we're doing at FPL is testing it to develop a grade stamp. Then the lumber will meet building codes and can be used by architects and builders. Right now its use is limited," says Falk.

While the inherent quality of the wood is high, the lumber has often suffered damage (such as nail holes, gouges, and splitting) due to the original construction process, a lifetime of use, and, finally, the deconstruction process. Falk, along with lumber grading and standards agencies, is working to quantify these types of damage and determine what effects they have. To date, he has evaluated more than 1,000 pieces of lumber.

Forest Service Proposes Simpler Process for Small, Environmentally Safe Timber Sales

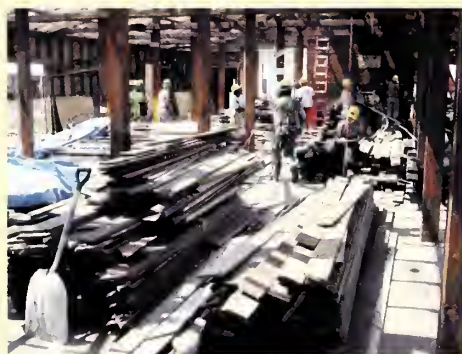
On January 3, 2003, the Forest Service proposed to simplify documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for three new categories of small, environmentally safe timber sales. The proposed categories apply to management activities that do not significantly impact the environ-



An AmeriCorps volunteer saws some planking. Said one volunteer, "This project is an education itself."



A Habitat for Humanity worker pulls out nails from roof supports.



Lumber stacked and ready to be moved.

ment, such as salvaging dead and dying trees and removing insect-infested or diseased trees to prevent larger infestations. The proposals were sent to the Federal Register on January 3 to be published for public review and comment.

The proposed categories would be applied to projects up to 250 acres in size and requiring only 1/2 mile or less of temporary roads. The projects would be used to remove trees that posed a hazard to public safety and contained small-insect and disease outbreaks. The projects would not be used in areas where they might create adverse effects on threatened and endangered species or their designated critical habitat, wilderness areas, inventoried roadless areas, wetlands, and archeological or historic sites. The proposal complements proposals made in December 2002 for fuels reduction and postfire restoration activities, but is more limited in scope.

“Categorical exclusions like those we are proposing will assist the agency in meeting its mission of caring for the land,” said Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth. “The proposed categories are about how we document our decisions regarding activities that are environmentally safe. Through these proposed categories, the agency hopes to reduce the bureaucratic red tape and save time, energy, and money in preparing small, routine projects that are supported by local communities.”

A 2001 review of 154 recent low-impact forest management activities, such as those proposed, showed no significant effect on the environment, and therefore they should not require lengthy documentation. The proposed new categories would not be subject to administrative appeal because of their limited scope.

J A N U A R Y 1 7, 2 0 0 3

M E S S A G E F R O M T H E C H I E F

Unqualified Audit Opinion

I am proud to say that the Forest Service has turned a corner in financial management. We were once known as a model of efficiency, but over the years we slipped into business practices so bad that the USDA Office of Inspector General (OIG) repeatedly refused to perform an audit. Year after year, OIG issued a disclaimer. But not this year. In fiscal 2002, OIG not only agreed to perform an audit, but also gave us an unqualified audit opinion, the highest opinion it can give.

This “Miracle on 14th Street” came just 2 years after the Forest Service was charged with violating the Antideficiency Act by spending more money than appropriated by Congress to suppress the large fires of 2000. The 2002 fire season was almost as severe and even more expensive, yet we still received an unqualified opinion. The credit belongs to you. I deeply appreciate your leadership, dedication, and sacrifice.

My goal is for the Forest Service to again become a leadership model in both financial management and natural resource management. Much remains to be done. The audit report identifies six major weaknesses that must be addressed. We must continue to improve our financial processes and eliminate manual effort and rework. I am confident that we can meet the challenge and continue to move forward.

Congratulations on such a tremendous accomplishment!

Dale N. Bosworth
Chief

Wildland Firefighter Memorial Dedicated

On November 22, 2002, approximately 100 people—family, friends, and Forest Service employees—dedicated a firefighter memorial at the Brasstown Ranger District office in honor of Mary Jo Brown. Ms. Brown lost her life November 20, 1994, while fighting a wildfire on Cedar Mountain south of Blairsville, Georgia.

“Safety cannot ever be taken for granted,” said Zone Fire Management Officer Sheldon Henderson during the dedication ceremony. “This firefighter memorial is something we are proud to be able to do for Mary Jo and hope that it provides those in the future with a better understanding of how much she meant to us and how dedicated she was as a Forest Service employee.”

The Memorial was made possible by donations from employees and a generous contribution from the Chattahoochee Oconee Forest Interpretive Association.

Mary Jo Brown graduated from Georgia State University in 1971 with a bachelor of science degree. She began working with the Forest Service in October 1976 in the Atlanta Regional Office as a clerk/stenographer with the Cooperative Fire Protection Staff. While working in the Cold Springs Ranger District in Arkansas in 1979, she began working on her master of forestry degree at Duke University. After receiving her degree, she worked as a forester trainee on the Sumter National Forest in South Carolina. She worked as a forester on the Tyger and Enoree Districts before moving to the Brasstown District in 1985.



Plaque at memorial for Mary Jo Brown. A bronze plaque containing a likeness of Ms. Brown on the upper left, a Forest Service shield on the upper right, and words of loving tribute below these was embedded in a large rock taken from the Brasstown District. A purple ribbon like those worn in honor of fallen firefighters and a small Smokey Bear pin that had belonged to Ms. Brown were embedded into a log as a symbol of respect and love from the Brasstown District.

2002 National Fire Plan Award Winners

The Forest Service presented awards for the 2002 National Fire Plan in the following categories.

Excellence in Firefighter Preparedness, Safety, and Training

Develop procedures, training, guidelines, and equipment; increase commitment to enhance firefighter training, increase safety, and improve preparedness by increasing the capability to prevent and detect wildfires and provide suppression on those fires.

- Greg Power, Program Manager, and Shirley Sutliff, Apprenticeship Program Coordinator, USDA Forest Service, California.
- Matt Reidy and Jeff Pendleton, USDA Forest Service, Oregon, and George Chesley and Doug Ledgerwood, Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Excellence in Rehabilitation and Restoration

Develop procedures, methods, or other measures or mechanisms; demonstrated effort, results, innovation, collaboration, or commitment that resulted in effective land treatment, valuable research, technology transfer, prevention of further damage to ecosystems and communities as a result of fire; or helped to improve land unlikely to recover naturally from fire.

- Hayman Fire Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation Team, Pike and San Isabel National Forests, Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands, USDA Forest Service, Colorado.

J A N U A R Y 3 1, 2 0 0 3

Forest Service Leaders Meet To Discuss Competitive Sourcing

By Bobbie Mixon, Jr., Office of Communication, Washington Office

Members of the Forest Service National Leadership Team and Washington Office (WO) staff directors met January 21 and 22, 2003, in Washington, DC, for a special session on Competitive Sourcing.

Sometimes referred to as the Commercial Activities Program, or the A-76 Program, Competitive Sourcing mandates that the government find the most competitive service, whether public or private, to deliver the government's programs unless delivery is through positions that are inherently governmental. Moreover, it means the Forest Service will compete with private contractors for the ability to perform some work traditionally accomplished by agency employees.

Leaders met to discuss how to use the program to make the agency more cost effective and efficient, while at the same time position the Forest Service to effectively compete for the work and sensitively moderate impacts to employees. According to those present at the meeting, effects of competitive sourcing studies on agency employees continues to be a primary concern.

Fiscal year (FY) 2003 is the first year in which the Forest Service will implement competitive sourcing on a large scale. The agency will release details on its first two major competitions, information technology (IT) infrastructure services and maintenance services, in the coming weeks.

Cutting the High Cost of Firefighting

By Roberta Burzynski and Jan Polasky, Northeastern Area, State and Private Forestry

Protecting rural areas from wildfire is critical, as has been seen this fire season. Rural fire departments, however, often cannot afford the equipment they need to protect life and property. A State and Private Forestry (S&PF) program helps rural fire departments obtain the vehicles, equipment, and protective gear they need—at no charge. Through the Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) program, the Forest Service lends equipment (usually from the military) that is no longer needed to States and communities for fire protection. Property most often loaned includes trucks, generators, pumps, fire hoses, breathing apparatus, and protective clothing.

To enable managers and more than a thousand users to locate available Federal excess personal property throughout the United States and its territories, a new interactive Web-based database—the Federal Excess Property Management System (FEPMIS)—was developed to share this data.

The system was inspired by a design developed by William Hale at the Missouri Department of Conservation. The Forest Service developed the FEPMIS prototype under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Army Information Systems Software Development Center in Fort Lee, VA. Programmers at IBM in Boulder, CO, completed the system development. Jan Polasky with the Northeastern Area S&PF in Newtown Square, PA, managed the system development project.

The Forest Service administers the FEPP program in cooperation with State foresters, who in turn maintain agreements with rural fire departments. State foresters and local fire departments that use the equipment pay only the costs of transporting, converting, and maintaining it. When property is no longer useful to the borrowing unit, the Forest Service makes it available to other units or disposes of it. FEPMIS also simplifies the initial acquisition of the property through a direct link with the General Services Administration's Web-based Federal Excess Disposal System.

The only requirements for using FEPMIS are Internet access, training, and a user identification and password assignment. User training is under way. The system is up and running in about a dozen States, with more coming on board each month. For more information on FEPMIS, call April Baily, FEPP National Program Officer, at 202-205-0891 or e-mail her at abaily@fs.fed.us.



"Before" pictures of a military truck acquired through the Federal Excess Personal Property program.



"After" pictures of the military truck turned into a brush truck for a volunteer fire department.

Flexible Spending Account Program Introduced

The Office of Personnel Management created flexible spending accounts (FSAs) for Federal agencies to help pay for health care expenses. A Health Care FSA (HCFSA) enables pretax reimbursement to participants of eligible medical costs not covered or reimbursed by insurance. A Dependent Care FSA (DCFSA) enables participants to be reimbursed on a pretax basis for childcare or adult dependent care expenses necessary to allow the employee (and his or her spouse) to work or seek work. Employees may elect a maximum of \$3,000 per plan year for a HCFSA; for a DCFSA, participants may elect an annual maximum of \$5,000.

F E B R U A R Y 1 4 , 2 0 0 3

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF Responding to the Call for Help

People around us are recognizing the value of our Incident Command System and our employees' abilities to handle emergency situations. In the past 18 months, we have been involved in several nonfire emergencies, including our assistance following September 11 with recovery efforts at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Now we are supporting both the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service on the Newcastle chicken disease epidemic and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration on the Columbia space shuttle recovery. In fact, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has asked the Forest Service to take on an increased leadership role in coordinating and conducting the ground search.

I am immensely proud of our people and the skills they can bring to bear in dealing with these types of emergencies. It seems that these nonfire emergencies are no longer the exception but are becoming more commonplace. As Chief of the Forest Service, I am determined to discover how we can meet our mission requirement for wildland fire protection while at the same time respond to more and more calls for help from people who need our skills. We recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the New York Fire Department to train its employees on the Incident Command System. I would like to see our agency instruct more people to use this system so they can more efficiently handle emergency situations.

Dale N. Bosworth
Chief

Forest Service Assists in Space Shuttle Recovery

A characteristic that makes Forest Service employees so unique is the high-quality manner in which they serve people. We commonly and eagerly accept assignments to help out in emergency situations (both fire and non-fire), such as the September 11 attacks at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Therefore, when the Nation called for our expertise in the recovery efforts of the Columbia space shuttle, we proudly stepped up to the task.

FEMA assigned the Forest Service a leadership role in the space shuttle recovery efforts in East Texas. When the National Guard disengaged from this incident to support Homeland Security efforts, 75 firefighting crews received orders to take the Guard's place. The USDA Forest Service and Texas Forest Service also developed a strategy to complete this mission within 30 days.

On February 14, the Forest Service had the following resources committed to this incident:

- Approximately 239 personnel (total), including personnel from Law Enforcement and Investigation (LEI), served in this recovery incident.
- A second Type II Incident Management Team and two Type I teams were ordered. There were 16 crews on site and an additional 75 crews ordered.
- Two videography aircraft and staff were on hand to provide aerial photographs.
- Eight Type III helicopters were on site, and 14 additional helicopters were ordered to provide intense aerial reconnaissance of fields and other areas.
- Miscellaneous equipment available included global positioning systems (GPS), all-terrain vehicles, weather stations, and satellite phones.
- Mobile caterers and showers also participated.

The Forest Service was primarily involved with ground searching, recording coordinates of debris sites through GPS, creating maps of the debris field, recovery and escort of material and human remains, and patrolling for possible theft of material.



Crew leaders planning search grid for Columbia space shuttle material.



Firefighting crew searching a forested area for shuttle material.



Forest Service crew walking in line to search for shuttle material.



Firefighting crew receives directions to prepare for search.

F E B R U A R Y 2 8 , 2 0 0 3

Forest Service Suspends Flight Operations of Baron Lead Planes

Deputy Chief of State and Private Forestry Joel Holtrop signed a decision memo that immediately suspended flight operations of all agency-owned Beechcraft 58P (BE-58P) Baron airplanes with more than 6,000 flight hours. During a recent Blue Ribbon panel review of the agency's aviation program, two separate analyses suggested that the safe life of the BE-58P is fewer flight hours than previously determined. For the safety of the pilots and to avoid a potential aircraft accident, all flight operations were suspended until an evaluation of the cost effectiveness and feasibility of an extended life program can be completed.



Beechcraft 58P Baron.

M A R C H 1 4 , 2 0 0 3

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF Expanded Partnership Opportunities

Throughout our history, we have worked with partners to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands. We need these partnership relationships now more than ever. I see us moving toward a time when we are conveners and facilitators as much as land managers. Sharing stewardship challenges with willing partners will be a key part of that new era.

In June 2002, Forest Service leadership committed to streamlining our partnership process. We formed a Partnership Task Force made up of employees from various backgrounds. Members, who worked full time for 6 months to make our partnership processes easier and more user friendly, came up with great ways of expanding our partnership opportunities.

Ultimately, end results are what count. Thanks to the task force, we can all look forward to some changes in the way we do business in the next few years. I commend and thank all employees and partners who contributed to the success of the task force.

Dale N. Bosworth
Chief

M E S S A G E F R O M T H E C H I E F

Workplace Security: Now More Than Ever

As world tensions have heightened, I want every employee to know that I am committed to providing you a safe and secure workplace. I can assure you that those involved with Forest Service Homeland Security are working diligently to provide emergency response capabilities to meet whatever challenges we may face. I am also relying on each of you to watch out for each other. Be alert, be aware of your surroundings, and do not hesitate to report suspicious activity. I encourage you to talk about any concerns you may have with a coworker, a friend, or even with trained professionals in the Employee Assistance Program. They are ready to offer support.

We must also keep in our thoughts the brave men and women in the Forest Service who are serving in the military to fight the war in Iraq. Let's hope for their safe and speedy return, as well as for the safe return of all those in the service of this country. Please remain vigilant during this time of unique challenges.

Dale N. Bosworth

Chief

Forest Service Provides Disaster Assistance to Iraq

The Forest Service, through the International Programs/Disaster Assistance Support Program, provided substantial assistance to the humanitarian response efforts in the Persian Gulf region. With funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)/Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, Ron Libby of the USDA Forest Service International Programs went to Turkey to provide necessary support to this effort.

Working alongside personnel from USAID, Libby coordinated potential relief assistance for displaced persons in Northern Iraq. In addition, 10 Forest Service employees worked at the USAID Operations Center, which set up emergency operations centers and provides administrative support domestically and abroad. Support efforts to the Persian Gulf Region were expected to continue over several months.

2002 National Fire Plan Performance Report Is Released

During 2002, we made significant accomplishments in addressing wildland-urban interface challenges, in part due to implementing the National Fire Plan. For example, 600 communities were trained in the FIREWISE concepts of living safe in fire-prone areas. More than 3 million acres of Federal lands were treated for hazardous fuels, and 5,349 rural fire departments received grants for training, equipment, and public education materials on fire-related issues. "These examples are just a few of the hundreds of positive accomplishments of National Fire Plan projects in 2002," said Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth. "I urge you to look at the report and see the results in their entirety."

To view the complete 2002 Annual Performance Report, visit http://www.fireplan.gov/reports/perf_rpt_2002/index.htm.

Wildland fire was once a summer topic only. In recent years, however, it has become a year-round subject of discussion, as one fire season rolls into the next with little break. Members of the public, legislators, and interest groups alike have become more keenly aware of wildland fire issues. They challenge the Forest Service to reduce the effects of wildland fires on public lands and communities, while also restoring the health and vitality of these lands by returning fire to its natural role in the ecosystem.

Looking to the future, the Forest Service must focus on restoring the conditions of the land to a more healthy and balanced state where fire can play its natural role in the ecosystem. This is necessary to reduce the impacts to both natural and financial resources and make forest conditions safer for firefighters and the public. We are keenly aware that this is a lofty task that will take years, but one that will ultimately result in healthy, fire-safe forests and communities.

"I take this opportunity to commend our employees for the commitment to fire issues, as well as the outstanding collaboration with our partners and stakeholders that contributed to making the National Fire Plan a success in 2002," said Bosworth.

Forest Service Commemorates the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial

By Jane Knowlton, Office of Communication, Washington Office



A Forest Service exhibit—"The Legacy of Lewis and Clark: Enduring Stories, Dynamic Landscapes."

The legendary expedition of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark from 1803 to 1806 to explore lands west of the Mississippi River in search of a transcontinental water route is one of our Nation's greatest stories. As Lewis and Clark journeyed forth to the Pacific Coast exploring the uncharted West, their experiences yielded rich chapters in our early American history: pursuing adventure; making scientific discoveries; mapping the unknown; forming new partnerships of trust, friendship, and respect; and establishing trade and cultural exchanges. Their journals are filled with tales of great courage and perseverance.

"It is also a Forest Service story," says Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth. "We share much in common with these early explorers. For more than a century, we've been engaged in the pursuit of new scientific knowledge as well as effective partnerships to guide our way in caring for the land and serving people," he stated. "Now, we have an opportunity to share our successes and challenges and to continue sustaining and building new partnerships in the spirit of Lewis and Clark as our participation in Bicentennial events take place."

Since 1998, the Forest Service has been involved in planning and coordinating the Bicentennial with communities and tribes regarding the State and national forests and grassland units most closely associated with the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. Communities Tribes have received assistance through the Forest Service S&PF grant programs for projects and land acquisition that support tourism and public safety concerns.

The Forest Service is participating in the 21-member Federal consortium observing the nationwide Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration from 2003 to 2006. According to Kristen Nelson, the National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Coordinator, the Forest Service is working in cooperation with other Federal agencies, States, tribes, local communities, and the National Council of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial during the next 4 years to promote educational, cultural, and interpretive opportunities for citizens and visitors. "We've designed our programs to help people learn more about the natural, historical, and cultural resources that are part of the Lewis and Clark story," Nelson said.

Lewis and Clark's journey crossed through or passed by lands that would become 16 national forests and grasslands in 9 States: Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. Margaret Gorski, the Forest Service National Bicentennial Field Coordinator based in the Northern Regional Office in Missoula, noted that close to 1,000 miles of the 3,700-mile Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail cross or are in view of lands managed by the Forest Service, with North Dakota, Montana, and Idaho having the greatest association. "As people travel to visit Lewis and Clark sites and events, we'll be promoting stewardship of the land," Gorski added.

The commemoration kicked off in mid-January at Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's historic home in Charlottesville, Virginia. The event recognized President Jefferson's confidential letter written to Congress on January 18, 1803, asking for \$2,500 to fund an expedition to the Pacific Ocean.

President George W. Bush led the Nation's formal recognition of the Bicentennial with a presidential proclamation in June 2002. In a recent announcement, First Lady Laura Bush agreed to serve as Honorary Chair of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial and to work with the National Council of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial.

A P R I L 2 5 , 2 0 0 3

M E S S A G E F R O M T H E C H I E F

Great Issues and Great Diversions

When I hear the debate about national forest management, I sometimes think I am in the "Twilight Zone." Some of the arguments I hear about logging, roadbuilding, and grazing are the same ones I heard 20 and 30 years ago. But times have changed. For a variety of reasons, annual timber harvest has declined from more than 12 billion board feet to less than 2 billion. We now decommission 14 miles of road for every mile added to our forest road system; and 85 percent of the range in our grazing allotments is in stable, improving, or good condition.

After serving as Chief for 2 years, I have come to view the old arguments as diversions from the current major issues for the national forests and grasslands. Today, I believe that we face four great issues: fire and fuels; invasive species; habitat fragmentation; and unmanaged recreation, particularly the unmanaged use of off-highway vehicles (OHVs).

Several of these issues are major challenges for all the Nation's forests, regardless of the owner—the Federal Government, a State or local government, or private entity. We need a public dialogue that focuses on these issues; the public and the media, however, are often distracted by the old debates over logging, roadbuilding, and grazing. As I recently told the National Leadership Team and audiences in California, it is time to focus on the four great issues of the early 21st century. We will all have an opportunity to help reshape the debate at every level. I expect your help.

Dale N. Bosworth
Chief

Fighting for Our Freedom

Our thoughts and prayers went out to Forest Service employees who are in the military and were called to active duty to help defend our country. The following is a partial list of the brave Forest Service men and women to whom we owe our deepest gratitude.

- Scott Blake, Fishlake National Forest, Region 4
- Ron Borba, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Region 4
- Stephen D. Bumps, Androscoggin District, White Mountain National Forest, Region 9
- William (Bill) T. Civish, Ashley National Forest, Region 4
- Brian Christensen, Fishlake National Forest, Region 4
- Lyn Christensen, Fishlake National Forest, Region 4
- Scott Clemans, North Kaibab Ranger District, Kaibab National Forest, Region 3
- LeRoy Cyr, Orleans Ranger District, Six Rivers National Forest, Region 5
- Randy Dickinson, Dixie National Forest, Region 4
- Michelle Drapeau, Bend and Ft. Rock Ranger District, Deschutes National Forest, Region 6.
- Ronald Scott Eveleigh, Bitterroot National Forest, Region 1
- Nathan (Andy) Fatheree, Ashley National Forest, Region 4
- Donna Galik, Region 9
- Kim Gilbert, Boise National Forest, Region 4
- Chuck Gondeiro, Bitterroot National Forest, Region 1
- Kevin Hadley, Region 10
- Darin Ivie, Fishlake National Forest, Region 4
- Gerry Jackson, Forest Products Laboratory, Madison, Wisconsin
- Marc R. Joyal, Forest Products Laboratory, Madison, Wisconsin
- Fred Kaminski, Ashley National Forest, Region 4
- Brian B. Monroe, Ashley National Forest, Region 4
- Marleen Moya, Sacramento Ranger District, Lincoln National Forest, Region 3
- Jon C. Pfeiffer, Pike-San Isabel National Forests, Region 2
- Monte Richardson, Yampa Ranger District, Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests, Region 2
- Dennis E. Smith, Region 5
- Ralph Smith, Fishlake National Forest, Region 4
- Michael J. Picard, Three Rivers Ranger District, Colville National Forest, Region 6
- Teresea R. Price, Houston/Rolla/Cedar Creek Ranger District, Mark Twain National Forest, Region 9
- Solomon Workman, Monongahela National Forest, Region 9
- Donald Weiand, Black Hills National Forest, Region 2
- Michael White, Region 8

National Golden Passport Program Goes Interagency

By Teri Cleeland, Program Leader, Recreation Fee Demonstration

As of April 18, 2003, the Forest Service began honoring Interagency Golden Passports at more than 1,150 national forest recreation sites, a dramatic increase from only 17 sites in 2002. Rather than create a new program, the Forest Service chose a program already in existence and modified it to meet the demands of the public and Congress. In a letter to regional foresters, Deputy Chief Tom Thompson wrote, "This is a positive step toward addressing interagency consistency and benefits cited by Congress."

Now the public has access to one pass with more benefits, saving time and money. For example, a visitor can use a Golden Eagle Passport for entrance to national parks and national forest locations covered by regional passes, such as the Northwest Forest Pass or California's Adventure Pass. Before this change, a visitor had to spend \$30 for a regional pass in addition to another \$65 for a Golden Eagle Passport.

Visitors have consistently said they are willing to pay fees as long as the fee system is simple and the places where they recreate most often are enhanced by the dollars they spend. The Golden Passport Program delivers just that, retaining 80 percent of the revenue at the point of sale.

Three National Golden Passports are available. The Golden Eagle Passport is honored at all Forest Service sites that charge fees to enter Federal recreation areas and use high-impact recreation areas and developed day-use recreation sites, which may include picnic sites, low-development boat ramps, trailheads, visitor centers, and parking. The Golden Eagle Passport is honored for 1 year from the date of purchase and costs \$65 annually. The National Park Service (NPS), BLM, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will continue to honor the Golden Passports as they have in the past.

The Golden Age Passport is a lifetime pass available to citizens or permanent residents of the United States who are 62 years of age or older. In addition to the benefits provided by the Golden Eagle Passport, the Golden Age Passport provides a 50 percent discount at campgrounds, developed boat launches, swimming sites, and for specialized interpretive services. This pass sells for a one-time \$10 fee.

The Golden Access Passport is a free, lifetime pass available to citizens or permanent residents of the United States who have been medically determined to be blind or permanently disabled. The Golden Access Passport provides the same benefits as the Golden Age Passport.

Linda Goodman, regional forester of the Pacific Northwest Region, recognizes the benefits of this program: "The Golden Passports provide a simple, easy way to enjoy public lands while supporting conservation projects, trail maintenance, facility repair, and visitor information. It's a great way for the public to directly support America's Great Outdoors."

Visitors can purchase the Golden Eagle Passport at most Forest Service offices, order them on line at <http://www.natlforests.org>, or request them by phone by calling toll-free 1-877-465-2727.



2002 National Range Management Awards

Each year since 1988, the Chief of the Forest Service has presented the National Range Management Award to individuals and groups in recognition of their exemplary accomplishments in the stewardship of National Forest System rangelands. At the end of each fiscal year, nominations are requested in two categories: Forest Service employees (In-service Award) and external partners (Out-service Award). A committee evaluates all candidates based on their contributions to ecosystems health; the multiple benefits to people, scientific, and technical assistance; and effective public service.

In-service Award

This year's In-service Award recipient is Warren Ririe, the Rangeland Management Staff Officer on the Boise and Sawtooth National Forests in Idaho. He consistently pioneers new ways to graze high- and mid-elevation rangelands to promote improved vegetative conditions and better health of riparian areas. As a result, grazing is once again allowed in areas where listed fish exist. Warren has also been instrumental to the development of Cooperative Weeds Management Areas in southwestern Idaho. Through his efforts, noxious weeds management goes beyond political and jurisdictional boundaries, and provides for cooperation among Federal, State, local, and private entities to work together in the most effective way at the watershed level. Warren is recognized by his peers as an exemplary rangeland manager who has a long history of positive influence on rangeland resources.

Out-service Award

David and Tammy Ogilvie of the U Bar Ranch near Silver City, NM, received the Out-service Award for their work with the Gila National Forest. Through their cooperative and diligent efforts, David and Tammy have helped restore 15 miles of stream reach of the Gila River, making it a vibrant and dynamic riparian community. The Ogilvies' efforts have ensured the future survival of the southwestern willow flycatcher, loach minnow, and the spikedace in the river. By voluntarily excluding livestock from areas that need rest, reducing livestock numbers on other areas, and changing to a type grazing management system, David and Tammy Ogilvie greatly improved watershed and vegetative conditions on the 40,000 acres in their four forest grazing allotments.

Associate Chief Sally Collins honored the award winners at a ceremony in Casper, WY, on February 1, 2003. At the awards ceremony, all nominees were recognized for their excellent contributions and dedication to rangeland management.

Forest Service Volunteer Program—30 Years Strong

The Forest Service "Volunteers in the National Forests" program has provided assistance in natural resource protection and management programs at nominal costs for the past 30 years. More than 1.7 million volunteers have participated in recreation, resource protection and management, cooperative/interna-



In-service Award recipient Warren Ririe.

tional forestry, research, and wildlife projects. They have accomplished conservation work valued at more than \$696 million.

In FY 2002, 90,678 people volunteered for the Forest Service. The appraised value of work performed by these volunteers was \$38 million. The Volunteer program also provided international opportunities, hosting 73 participants from different countries. The Touch America Program, a youth component of the Volunteer program, provided opportunities for 215 youth aged 14 to 17 to gain work experience and environmental awareness while working on public lands.

Several years ago, a Federal Interagency Team on Volunteerism was created as part of the e-government initiative. As a result, a Web site called <http://www.Volunteer.Gov/Gov> was developed to enhance the public's ability to locate nationwide volunteer opportunities administered by government agencies. Volunteer.Gov/Gov, a partnership among the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Defense, Interior, and Veterans Affairs and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, State of New York Division of Veterans Affairs, Corporation for National and Community Service, and U.S.A. Freedom Corps, aspires to provide a single, easy-to-use Web portal with information about volunteer opportunities. The Web site sorts volunteer opportunities by keyword, State, activity, partner, and/or date range.

During National Volunteer Week, April 27–May 3, 2003, many volunteer service awards will be presented to individuals, sponsors, corporations, retirees, international visitors, youth, campground hosts, Forest Service employees, and Forest Service units for their significant contributions.

Volunteerism—Alive and Well in the Forest Service

*By Don Howlett, New Century of Service-Community Service Coordinator,
Hiawatha National Forest*

For millions of Americans, volunteering is the key to healthy, fulfilling and meaningful lives. According to the Department of Labor, 27.6 percent of Americans over the age of 16 volunteered through or for organizations from September 2001 to September 2002. During National Volunteer Week, April 27–May 3, 2003, many of these dedicated men, women, and young people will be saluted for their efforts and commitment to serve.

Forest Service employees are no exception to this spirit of service. In fact, Forest Service employees have a long history of volunteering in the communities in which they live and work. In many of these communities, both small and large, Forest Service employees and retirees are the backbone of the volunteer labor force, serving as scout leaders, church leaders, volunteer firefighters, board members, PTA leaders, committee members, activity and event organizers, and in other community service roles.

In recognition of this tradition of community service, the New Century of Service (NCS) program is highlighting the exemplary role Forest Service employees and retirees play in their communities. The NCS Web site has captured some of the notable stories of Forest Service employees and retirees who volunteer.



Teena Ligman with daughter Megan.

The following is an example of those interesting and inspirational stories.

Teena Ligman, Public Affairs Specialist for the Wayne and Hoosier National Forests, has a passion for helping children. As a foster parent for nine children, and as the adoptive parent of two children with extensive special needs, Teena has had a dramatic impact on the lives of children. She also helps youth in Bedford, IN, develop personal and leadership skills through her work as an active member and officer of the Jaycees.

Teena also provides relief to victims of disaster as a member of the local Emergency Response Team of the American Red Cross. In addition, she is the “lady” the local American Cancer Society chapter turns to as the “Daffodil Lady,” the “Love Lights Lady,” and the “Home Tour Lady,” as well as serving on their board of directors. It should also be noted that Teena serves in the U.S. Army Reserves and was deployed to both Desert Storm and Bosnia.

For her volunteer service, Teena received a USDA Point of Light Award, signed by former Forest Service Chief Dale Robertson. Teena also has received a “Pillar of the Community” award from the city of Bedford.

M A Y 9, 2003

M E S S A G E F R O M T H E C H I E F

Meeting the Challenges of Competitive Sourcing

I am hearing a lot about Competitive Sourcing wherever I go. Sally Collins and all the Deputies say the same thing. I know there is a lot of organizational concern. Dedicated employees throughout the agency feel threatened and undervalued—especially folks in programs identified for direct conversion or future study. To address those concerns, a human resources strategy has been created to provide support for employees.

But with or without competitive sourcing, we need to become more cost effective. As our costs continue to climb, less money is getting to the ground. I know we can find more efficient ways of doing business, whether we do the work ourselves or contract it out. Competitive sourcing gives us a structured way to do that. It helps us find efficiencies that we might otherwise miss. We have some of our best people working on it, and I am confident that we will be a better organization as a result.

Dale N. Bosworth
Chief

Recap on Competitive Sourcing Progress

By Bobbie Mixon, Jr., Office of Communication, Washington Office

Less than 5 months before the September 30 deadline for completion of FY 2003 Competitive Sourcing studies, it was time to recap the initiative. “Competitive Sourcing is new to the Forest Service. We’re learning as we go,” said Tom Mills, Deputy Chief of Business Operations for the Forest Service. “We’re doing our best to navigate a difficult and complex process with the expertise of our best people, and I think we’re making progress.”

Competitive Sourcing requires Federal agencies to determine the most competitive source to deliver government services, whether public or private. Work studied under the Competitive Sourcing initiative can be performed by the private sector.

“The idea behind Competitive Sourcing is to compete how we do business with how a public or private company would do the same business,” said Mills. “I have every confidence that as we continue the process and gain experience, we will see payoffs that improve our organization, make us more efficient, and generate more pride in ownership of our work.”

According to the Competitive Sourcing management team responsible for the project, the initiative would result in organizational changes and new ways of doing business as the strategy plays out over 3 years. Officials noted that progress was being made with the first of those organizational changes resulting from studies planned for 2003.

The following areas with the listed full-time equivalent (FTEs) were studied in FY 2003:

| Function | Number of FTEs |
|--|----------------|
| Content Analysis Team | 45 |
| End User Support Center (direct conversion) | 150 |
| IT infrastructure | 1,200 |
| Job Corps | 940 |
| Maintenance activities | 1,655 |
| Total | 3,990 |

FTEs for FY 2003 were the first of more than 10,000 planned for study by the Forest Service during the next 3 fiscal years, as required by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). OMB required the Forest Service to study 3,035 FTEs in FY 2003; the Forest Service, however, planned to study 3,990 FTEs. “Our objective in studying more than required is to give ourselves some flexibility so we can handle issues we may not have foreseen,” said Mills.

For more information on competitive sourcing, visit the Competitive Sourcing Web site at <http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/pma/main/CS.shtml>.

Healthy Forests Initiative Update

The U.S. House of Representatives approved HR 1904, the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003, sponsored by Representative Scott McInnis (Colorado), on May 20, 2003, by a vote of 256–170. Before passage, a substitute bill introduced by Representative George Miller (California) was defeated, and a motion by Representative Tom Udall (New Mexico) to strike the two sections related to judicial review was also defeated. HR 1904 will now go to the Senate, and committee sources have indicated they expect to take the bill up in June or July.

On May 20, Department of Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman and Department of Interior Secretary Gale A. Norton briefed President Bush on the two Departments' progress in implementing the Healthy Forests Initiative. The President then briefed the White House press corps on the progress of the HFI. In particular, he discussed the fire outlook season, hazardous fuels treatments to date, HR 1904, and HFI. He also announced a series of new administrative steps to reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfires and improve the health of our Nation's forests. The President conveyed a strong message to Congress, urging them to complete action on HR 1904 and get it to his desk as quickly as possible.

On Thursday, May 22, USDA Under Secretary Mark Rey and Forest Service Associate Chief Sally Collins toured the Huron-Manistee National Forest in Michigan to see firsthand how the Forest Service was responding to the HFI and how this initiative is reducing the threat of wildland fire to residents in Alcona and Iosco Counties, MI.

Specifically, they toured the Oscoda Project, which demonstrated how active forest management is accomplishing these tasks simultaneously:

- Protecting communities from the risk of wildland fire.
- Enhancing the habitat of an endangered bird.
- Providing electricity for Lincoln, Michigan.
- Restoring forest health in a timely manner.

The following final or proposed rules were scheduled to be published in the Federal Register:

- Final rule for the Categorical Exclusion for Hazardous Fuels Treatment Projects and Rehabilitation and Restoration of Burned Areas.
- Final rule revising the Notice, Comment, and Appeal procedures (36 CFR part 215) in accordance with the Appeals Reform Act.
- Proposed Section 7 Endangered Species Act Counterpart Regulation rule for public review and comment.
- For more information on the HFI, visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/projects/HFI.shtml> or <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/healthyforests/>.

Wows and Firsts—Fascinating Forest Service Facts

By Teresa Haugh, Public Affairs Specialist, Region 10

For 100 years, the Forest Service has managed and protected a great system of public lands for the benefit of all Americans. Along the way, it has compiled an impressive list of accomplishments that are not well known outside the agency. From silk parachutes to “scratch and sniff” perfume samples, from “no lick” postage stamps to crime forensics that helped crack the 1934 Lindbergh kidnapping case, the Forest Service has made a number of lasting contributions.

The agency’s land management role has included fire fighting for most of its history. The use of aviation in World War I led firefighters to recognize that the new and improved airplanes produced for the war effort might be useful in searching for wildfires in remote areas. As early as 1919, Army Air Service pilots flew fire detection missions with Forest Service observers. In 1929, the idea of dropping supplies was conceived and actually put into practice. The Forest Service used a burlap parachute to deliver supplies to firefighters on the line. In a few years, dropping cargo by parachutes, which were now made of silk, became a common practice.

In 1934, Forest Ranger T.V. Pearson came up with a new approach: what if these billows of silk could be used to deliver men to the front lines? Pearson eventually had to discard the idea because of the risk involved. Later, the assistant chief of fire control, David Goodwin, considered dropping chemicals or water on wildland fires. When his plan of fire “bombing” proved impractical, Goodwin turned once again to the idea of dropping men.

In 1939, a series of experiments using parachutes to drop men took place. Success came on July 12, 1940, when Rufus Robinson and Earl Cooley successfully parachuted over Nez Perce National Forest in Idaho; they were the world’s first smokejumpers. Others followed, and smokejumpers were used at nine fires that year.

The smokejumping phenomenon was just gaining acceptance when World War II broke out. The military, noting the success of the smokejumpers, instituted the first paratrooper training facility at Fort Benning, Georgia. The paratroopers used techniques the Forest Service had developed and adopted equipment the Forest Service had designed, including the Derry slotted parachute, the static line, and the reserve chute.

A new threat arose in 1944 when the Japanese sent balloon bombs to the West Coast of North America with the express purpose of starting forest fires. U.S. officials were worried not only about fire, but whether the balloons could be used to deliver biological warfare agents. Their fears were not made public. In response to the threats, the Forest Service organized Operation Fire Fly, a group of 2,700 civilian and military personnel trained to combat wildfires.

Three hundred of the smokejumpers in Operation Fire Fly came from the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion at Fort Benning. This first, all-African-American parachute infantry platoon, created in 1943 and known as the Triple Nickels, was based primarily in Pendleton, OR, and Chico, CA. From April to October 1945, the 555th made 1,200 jumps and helped suppress 36 fires. They became pioneers in combating fires in heavily forested areas, and some of their methods are still in use today.

But firefighting was not the only area in which the Forest Service provided assistance.

In 1934, Forest Service experts helped to bring a suspected criminal to justice in the “trial of the century.” On March 1, 1932, Charles A. Lindbergh, Jr., the infant son of the world-famous aviator, Charles A. Lindbergh, was kidnapped from his nursery in the family estate in Hopewell, NJ. The largest manhunt in history began. A ransom was paid, but the child was not returned; his decomposing body was found 2 months later not far from his home. On September 19, 1934, police arrested in New York a German immigrant carpenter named Bruno Richard Hauptmann on circumstantial evidence. When his trial began in January 1935, police had found no fingerprints at the crime scene, and more importantly, no murder weapon. The prosecutors, however, had an expert witness.

Arthur Koehler was an authority on wood anatomy research at the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, WI. Koehler testified at Hauptmann’s trial that a section of attic floorboard taken from Hauptmann’s apartment precisely matched the grain of wood in a homemade ladder used by the kidnapper to enter the Lindbergh home. Koehler conducted a survey of planing mills from New York to Alabama, analyzing the identifying marks put on lumber during the milling process. Koehler was able to trace some of the ladder lumber from a mill in South Carolina to a lumber dealer in the Bronx where Hauptmann had once worked. One juror said Koehler had provided “the most significant” forensic evidence in the case.

Forest Service researchers had a pheromone that acted as a repellant to attacking beetles looking for a host tree. The problem was the delivery process; Placing the pheromone by hand on individual trees was time consuming. When the researchers encapsulated the active ingredient of the pheromone in microscopic beads suspended in water, they found that this material could be quickly sprayed on trees, even from the air. As the water around the beads dried, the pheromone migrated through the thin walls of the microcapsules and into the air surrounding the tree trunks. The attacking beetles got a “back off” message, and the Forest Service got an environmentally friendly tool in their war against the beetles.

Another environmental issue was raised in 1994. The U.S. Postal Service faced a quandary with their “no lick” stamps. Troublesome contaminants in the adhesives interfered with the recycling of the stamps. The Postal Service initiated a program called “Environmentally Benign Pressure Sensitive Adhesives for Postal Applications.” Thirteen companies submitted their adhesive products to the program for evaluation.

Again, the Forest Service FPL became involved. The lab developed pilot protocols for testing the adhesives for recycling. In addition, to ensure the stamps were durable enough to survive their journeys, the lab created permanence standards tests. Thanks in part to Forest Service input, self-adhesive stamps are widely used today.

Note: As the Forest Service approaches its centennial in 2005, the agency is pausing to commemorate these and other contributions that Forest Service employees have made to the United States and the rest of the world. The “wows and firsts” mentioned in this article were researched and provided by a team of Forest Service employees working under the NCS program.

M E S S A G E F R O M T H E C H I E F

Focus on What We Leave on the Land

Recently the Forest Service has received some effective new tools: stewardship contracting; categorical exclusions for fuels treatments and burned-area rehabilitation and restoration; and new procedures for notice, comment, and appeals.

But we will be watched very closely, and rightly so, to make sure that we use these new tools as intended. We must prove our critics wrong. We must be intelligent about how we implement stewardship contracting; we cannot afford any mistakes. We must also carefully consider how we use each categorical exclusion, staying true to the original intent. And we must implement all the changes through upfront collaboration. We need to involve the public early on and more meaningfully in our decisionmaking. We must show that we are not cutting anyone out of the process. I will expect regional foresters to pay close attention in particular to how appeals are handled on each forest.

I am sure our intentions will always be good, but how do we avoid dumb mistakes? By making sure that what we do is for the benefit of the land and not just for the benefit of the agency. If we can focus on what we leave on the land, then public confidence will grow in our use of these new tools, and so will our ability to use them.

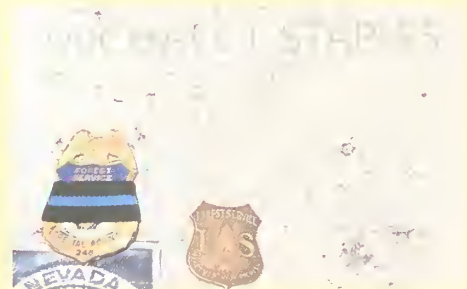
Dale N. Bosworth
Chief

Forest Service Officer Honored in Washington, DC

Fallen Forest Service Law Enforcement Officer (LEO) Michael Lee Staples, Region 9, Chippewa National Forest, who was killed in the line of duty on September 4, 2002, was honored at services held during National Police Week in Washington, DC, during the week of May 12, 2003. A large contingent of Officer Staples' family and Forest Service coworkers participated in various ceremonies throughout the week, including a Candlelight Vigil at the National Law Enforcement Officer's Memorial where Staples' name was engraved on the granite wall, a National Police Survivors Conference, and the National Peace Officers Memorial Day Service at the U.S. Capitol.

President George W. Bush and Attorney General John Ashcroft spoke at the Memorial Day service to honor law enforcement personnel who have made the ultimate sacrifice. Chief Dale Bosworth attended ceremonies during the week and spoke with the family and co-workers of Officer Staples to express his gratitude for Staples' dedicated service to the agency.

Members of Officer Staples' family, Robin Staples and Ed and Joyce Fairbanks (pictured, left), were honored guests during the week and were escorted by family friend and Forest Service LEO Paul Nordeen. Also attending the ceremonies to honor Mike's many years of service to the Forest Service and its communities were LEI Director Rich Padilla, Assistant Directors Ann Melle and Greg



Officer Staples' name engraved on wall at National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, DC.



Staples' family and Officer Nordeen receive Officer Staples' Medal of Honor at a U.S. Capitol ceremony.



Mike Staples with wife Robin and sons Adam and Luke.



New fire shelter.

Nichols, Special Agent in Charge (R-9) Rich Glodowski, Regional Patrol Commander (R-9) Berneice Anderson, and approximately 15 other LEI co-workers.

Forest Service LEO Kim Kinville arrived at the ceremony after bicycling hundreds of miles as part of a police unity tour raising funds to maintain the National Law Enforcement Officer's Memorial. She pedaled more than 250 miles in 3 days from Chesapeake, VA, to Washington, DC.

Staples started his Forest Service career in 1994 as a cooperative education LEO in the Chippewa National Forest; he served his entire LEO career there. He lived in rural Bemidji, MN, with his wife, Robin, and two young sons, Luke and Adam. He grew up in Cass Lake, MN, was a member of the Leech Lake Band tribe, and was well known and respected by many in the area and throughout LEI.

National Police Week occurred May 12–16, 2003, in Washington, DC, to honor LEOs who died in the line of duty in the previous calendar year and to offer support to the survivors of those officers as well as survivors of officers slain in past years. In 2002, 148 peace officers were killed in the line of duty. Over the last decade, an average of 165 officers were killed, 59,000 officers were assaulted, and 19,000 officers were injured per year.

The Forest Service has had four previous LEOs killed in the line of duty; their names also are engraved on the National Law Enforcement Officer's Memorial in Washington, DC.

New Fire Shelter Available in June

A new fire shelter developed to provide better protection for wildland firefighters was made available for use in June 2003. The new shelter provides an 81 percent reduction in temperature rise compared to the old one. Wildland firefighters are required to attend a training session to learn how to use the new shelter before they are allowed to carry it on the fireline. The original shelters can be used until the transition to the new shelters is complete, which may take 2 to 4 years.

For more information, go to http://www.nifc.gov/safety_study/annual-refresh/hot_topics/fire_shelter.html.

District Ranger Receives John R. McGuire Award

Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth presented Bend/Fort Rock District Ranger Walt Schloer an award on June 3, 2003, for his outstanding performance in managing one of the agency's largest and most complex districts for 23 years.

Chief Bosworth presented Schloer with the National Association of Forest Service Retirees' John R. McGuire Award at the Inn of the Seventh Mountain, in Bend, OR, during a Pacific Northwest regional meeting. The newly established award is named in honor of John McGuire, who served as Forest Service chief from 1972 to 1979, and helped draft the National Forest Management Act. The National Association of Forest Service Retirees is a nonprofit organization of former agency employees who lend expertise and experience in the management of national forests by providing nonideological perspectives. "I'm very honored by the award and I appreciate this recognition by the association," Schloer said, after receiving a plaque from Bosworth.

Schloer was selected for the award for his expertise in managing the district, ability to gain public support for vegetative management projects and community service. Schloer's million-acre district is larger than many national forests. He manages an \$8 million annual budget, and leads a workforce of about 120 permanent employees, 100 temporary workers, and hundreds of volunteers. Together, they administer the Newberry National Volcanic Monument, Lava Lands Visitor Center, Deschutes River Trail, and much of the Three Sisters Wilderness.

In addition, Schloer and his staff manage a recreation program that includes 1,110 miles of trails, 52 campgrounds, 37 boating sites, more than 200 caves, and a nationally recognized OHV trail system.

Schloer oversaw revisions of the Mt. Bachelor Ski Resort master plan in 1986 and 1996, helping it become the Northwest's largest ski area. His innovative approach included construction of the resort's summit lift with helicopters, avoiding the need to construct roads to the site. He was also instrumental in acquiring Wild and Scenic River status for the Upper Deschutes River and a National Scenic Byway designation for the Cascades Lakes Highway.

During the past 10 years, the Bend/Fort Rock Ranger District commercial timber program has had the biggest commercial timber program with lowest unit costs of any single district in Oregon or Washington. Schloer has continually used small commercial harvests during this period to improve forest health and reduce hazardous fuels, while providing for wildlife needs.

In January of 2003, the Rotary Club International recognized Schloer's community service work when it presented him with its Service Above Self Award, the highest honor a Rotarian can receive. Only 140 members have received the award, among its 1.3 million worldwide volunteers. His international relief work with the Rotary includes water projects in Mexico and building schools in Vietnam.

Schloer served in U.S. Army intelligence in Vietnam from 1962 to 1964 and began his Forest Service career in California on the Inyo National Forest. He has also worked on the Angeles, Sequoia, San Bernardino, and Los Padres National Forests. Schloer and his wife Harriett have resided in Bend since 1980.



Walt Schloer receives John R. McGuire Award from Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth.

Employees Honored at 2003 Chief's Awards Ceremony



James Oftedal and several of his students accept a New Century of Service award for their work with the Central California Consortium in Region 5.

Congratulations to the 2003 Chief's awards recipients for their outstanding achievements in supporting the Forest Service mission. The awardees, who were honored for their exemplary accomplishments at a reception in Washington, DC, on June 12, 2003, are listed below.

Chief's Natural Resource Stewardship Award

Siuslaw Basin Partnership

Region 6, Siuslaw National Forest

For innovative collaboration with a variety of partners and funding strategies, which led to the implementation of a watershed restoration program that should be a model for the Nation.

Chief's Global Stewardship Award

- Dr. Robert C. Szar
Pacific Northwest Research Station
For sustained effort in contributing to the improvement of global forest stewardship.
- Charles A. Lawson
U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
For sustained support of the State Department's relationship with the USDA Forest Service International Program in the Middle East and North Africa.
- Bernard R. Parresol
Southern Research Station
For outstanding work with the People's Republic of China, Mexico, Portugal, and Spain and for helping to host the International Wetlands Symposium in China this year, which was a great success.
- Dr. Deborah J. Shields
Rocky Mountain Research Station
For providing international leadership in developing indicators of the positive and negative effects of mining on ecosystems and adjacent communities

Chief's Award for Early Career Scientists

- Patrick A. Zollner
North Central Research Station
For implementing a pioneering and comprehensive experimental research program to understand the factors limiting range expansion of the threatened American marten.

Chief's Award for Distinguished Science

- D. Jean Lodge
Forest Products Laboratory
For outstanding contributions to the biodiversity and mycological research in the Tropics.

Chief's Award for Excellence in Technology Transfer

Internal Winners

- Forest Roads and the Environment
San Dimas Technology and Development Center
For outstanding efforts to provide high-quality video training for road maintenance equipment operators showing how to reduce the impacts of roads on watersheds.
- The National Technology Transfer Team
Servicewide
For exhibiting extraordinary national leadership in technology transfer for Urban and Community Forestry.

External Winners

- Thomas D. Landis
Region 6
For excellence in transferring nursery technology and related assistance to American Indian tribes in the United States.
- Living Memorials Project Team
Northeastern Area
For creating 33 living memorials and developing tools for a nationwide network of communities to help restore hope and foster healing after September 11, 2001.

Chief's Award for New Century of Service

- Bruce Rieman
Rocky Mountain Research Station
In recognition for his many contributions to regional fisheries issues, his high personal integrity, intelligent leadership, modest attitude, unique approaches to research and management issues, and his ability to communicate and interact with managers at the field level.
- Central California Consortium
Region 5
For being instrumental in diversifying the USDA Forest Service workforce, being inclusive of all minority groups, and educating the underserved populations on natural resources.

Chief's Natural Resource Leadership Award

- Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Partnerships
Region 9, Huron-Manistee National Forest
For continued personal dedication to recovery of the endangered Kirtland's warbler and implementation of an international partnership with the Bahamas.

- Dr. Gordon Reeves
Pacific Northwest Research Station
For helping to build a strong foundation for management and conservation plans in aquatic ecosystems and for contributing to conservation biology and natural resource management.
- Province Resource Board
Region 5, Northern Province
For exemplary leadership in coordinating and integrating resource programs and workforce to accomplish the requirements of the Northwest Forest Plan in Region 5.

Chief's Partnership Award

- Anti-Mudding Initiative
Region 6, Okanogan-Wenatchee NF
For successfully bringing together diverse agencies and organizations to prevent damage to wet meadows, lake beds, and streams.
- Dr. Robert H. Falk
Forest Products Laboratory
For partnership efforts in implementing wood-framed building deconstruction and lumber salvage as a means to conserve the Nation's wood source.

Chief's Safety and Occupational Health Award

- William V. Bulger
Region 6
For exceptional support of Forest Service aviation operations in the prevention of accidents.

Chief's Multicultural Organization Award

- Esteban Rodriguez
Region 8, National Forests in Florida
In recognition of outstanding efforts while serving as the Hispanic Employment Program Manager.
- Multicultural Advisory Committee
Region 8, National Forests in Alabama
For diligently providing useful resources and enriching activities to help employees understand, welcome, and celebrate diversity as a positive force in the work environment.

Chief's Award for Budget and Financial Accountability

- Economic Aspects of Forest Management
Rocky Mountain Research Station
For developing an innovative method for predicting the suppression costs that helped the Forest Service meet the antideficiency policy in FY 2002.

- Jeffrey G. Park

Region 6

In recognition of his contributions to the advancement of financial accountability, goals, and objectives for the Forest Service.

- Lenise Lago

Region 6

In recognition of hereffective leadership and many contributions to the advancement of Budget and Financial Management goals and objectives for the Forest Service.

Chief's Award for Providing Business Operations Support

- Paul Poplett

Rocky Mountain Research Station

For developing a nationally recognized system that enables Forest Service Human Resources offices to locally produce personnel action forms, resulting in dramatic improvement in customer service and reduced costs.

- Information Technology Procurement Team

Acquisition Management Staff, WO

For developing effective IT contracts, partitioned to leverage competition and secure business with small and socially disadvantaged businesses.

- Budget and Accounting Group

Region 1, Flathead National Forest

For advancement of the financial health accountability of the Forest Service through providing a model accounting program and skills shared at all agency levels.

Chief's Gridlock Breaking Award

Siuslaw National Forest

Region 6

In recognition of the restoration and recreation strategy that has broken down traditional barriers, gained significant public support, and produced economic benefits to local and regional publics.

Chief's Volunteers National Program Awards—Volunteer of the Year

Pearl Burns

Region 3

For more than two decades of superior dedication promoting conservation and appreciation of native plants and wildflowers by working as a Forest Service Volunteer. Her efforts have enabled thousands of people to learn about and appreciate wildflowers and forest ecosystems.

USDA Retains National Forests Roadless Area Conservation Rule

Department of Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman announced on June 9, 2003, that the Department would retain the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (Roadless Rule) that protects millions of acres of critical watersheds, wildlife habitat, and unique ecosystems.

"We will move forward with a responsible and balanced approach that protects the environment and is responsive to the needs of rural communities," Veneman said. "We are committed to maintaining the character of designated, authentic roadless areas."

The USDA Forest Service planned to propose for public review an amendment to the rule to identify how State governors might seek relief for exceptional circumstances, such as to protect public health and safety or reduce wildfire risks to communities and critical wildlife habitat. These exceptions will clarify and augment exceptions already present in the rule. The rule would remain unchanged in States where governors choose not to seek relief for exceptional circumstances.

This decision followed the completed evaluation of comments received on a July 10, 2001, Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for a new Roadless Rule and the recent Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals decision upholding the rule.

The proposed amendment will be consistent with the five principles announced by USDA on May 4, 2001, to guide any changes to the rule: (1) informed decision making, (2) working together, (3) protecting forests, (4) protecting communities, homes, and property, and (5) protecting access to private property.

The proposed amendment to the rule will be published for public comment in the fall of 2003 with the goal of finalizing the amendment before the end of the calendar year.

The U.S. Department of Justice also announced that Alaska has agreed to settle its legal challenge to the application of the Jan. 12, 2001, Roadless Rule in Alaska. The settlement of Alaska's case resolves litigation over the application of this Rule in Alaska. Under the agreement, most Alaska national forests would remain off limits to development. Timber harvest would be prohibited on more than 95 percent of Alaska national forests, as required under existing forest plans.

M E S S A G E F R O M T H E C H I E F

Let's Get Smart About Safety

As we celebrate the 4th of July and move further into the fire season, I am concerned about the number of close calls, minor injuries, and fatalities we have recently experienced in Forest Service operations. Three events occurred during the week of June 9 alone. These accidents are occurring in different fields of work, so whatever part of the outfit you are in, I hope "safety first" is the order of the day.

We need to get smarter about doing our work safely. There are certain steps all of us can take, whether working individually or as part of a team. For those activities with a formal Job Hazard Analysis, it is important to review the analysis and identified mitigation measures before beginning your day. In addition, each and every one of us needs to think about everything we undertake at work or with our families, identify the potential threats to safety, and take appropriate preventive actions.

Our objective is to reduce the risk as much as possible and still get the job done. If the remaining risk is still too high, postpone the project until the risk can be reduced to a reasonable level.

I am convinced that if we get the word out to be proactive about reducing risk, we can get the job done safely and go home at the end of the day in good health.

A happy and safe 4th of July to everyone.

Dale N. Bosworth
Chief

Above and Beyond the Call of Duty

By Christie Kalkowski, Public Affairs Officer, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest

June 17, 2003, marked the first anniversary of the crash of Airtanker 130 on the Cannon Fire in California. The fires that ignited from that crash could have caused further devastation had it not been for the heroic efforts of several Forest Service engine crews. This article pays tribute to the tremendous acts of courage exhibited that day by engine crews who were on the scene.

The Cannon Fire began on Saturday, June 15, 2003, in the vicinity of Lost Cannon Canyon, approximately 6 to 8 miles southwest of Walker, California. The fire was reported around 1:00 p.m. By that evening, it had grown to about 200 acres. Bridgeport District personnel were staffing the fire with three hand crews and engines from the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. A Type II Incident Management Team was ordered.

On Sunday, June 16, a Great Basin Type II Incident Management Team arrived at 6:00 a.m. The fire grew substantially to several thousand acres on the west side of Highway 395, in and around the town of Walker. Engines started arriving by midday Sunday and immediately began protecting structures. By the time Walker was evacuated late in the afternoon, one residence had already burned. Highway 395, a major north-south artery for California-Nevada's border, was closed. Due to the complexity of the fire, a Type I Incident Management Team was ordered.



*View of the Cannon Fire from Topaz Lake.
(Photo/Helen Pass)*

On Monday afternoon, June 17, the fire was again threatening the town of Walker, backing downhill toward residences. A strike team of five engines—El Dorado National Forest Engines 33, 54, 64, 65, and Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit's Engine 43—were staged near the residences. Air operations were in full force, with helicopters making bucket drops and airtankers dropping retardant to defend a section of unfinished line.

As Airtanker 130 passed over the strike team of engines just before 2:45 p.m., a dramatic change in engine sound suddenly caused the crews to look up. At that terrifying moment, the strike team and residents at the scene believed that the tanker was going to land on top of them. The right wing of the tanker broke in half and then detached entirely, followed in turn by the left wing. The fuselage landed just across Highway 395, exploding on impact with a deafening sound, and then followed by an eerie silence. Only the tail section remained intact. Engine crew members felt both the resulting heat and shock wave. Intense smoke and oil and gas smells permeated the air.

Although the aircraft's initial explosion was extinguished by its own 2,000 gallons of retardant, the wings and engines had fallen into brush and ignited the dry fuels. This fire was wind driven toward a concentration of structures.

The engine crews bravely began chasing the ensuing wildfire, despite the trauma of believing they were going to die, subsequently witnessing this horrible crash, and then realizing that the airtanker crew could not have possibly survived. The fire was racing toward the town's gas station when the engine crews realized the imminent danger to life if the gas station caught fire. Many people, including other firefighters and the media, were in the immediate area of the gas station.

The engine crews flanked the fire's head and continued to flank along a dirt track road until the fuel type changed sufficiently to allow for increased ease of suppression. Their heroic action saved several homes and outbuildings, including the gas station, from being destroyed.

The stress that the fire crew personnel experienced that day was nearly unbearable, yet they successfully rose to the occasion. Over and over that day the extremely dedicated crews demonstrated their professional abilities to "stay alert, keep calm, think clearly, and act decisively."

Airtanker 130 pilot Steve Wass, copilot Craig Labare, and flight engineer Mike Davis, who all perished in the crash, would have been proud of the way the engine crews continued to "rock and roll" while the sky was falling. The Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest sincerely thanks these crews for giving all they could give, and then for giving even more. They were truly heroes.

TSP Starts Catch-Up Contribution Program

A new catch-up contribution program started on July 1, 2003, as part of the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). It enables eligible TSP participants who are age 50 and older to make tax-deferred catch-up contributions to their TSP account. The original purpose of this legislation was to provide women with an opportunity to “catch up” on their retirement savings when they returned to work after raising a family. The legislation has since been expanded, however, to provide a benefit to all TSP participants age 50 and older.

The catch-up contributions are in addition to a participant’s regular employee contributions and do not count against the TSP statutory contribution percentage limitations or the Internal Revenue Service’s elective deferral limit.

The TSP catch-up contributions are limited to \$2,000 for 2003, \$3,000 for 2004, \$4,000 for 2005, and \$5,000 for 2006 and thereafter. Participants make catch-up contributions on a pretax basis through their basic pay by payroll deduction.

Employees may start, stop, or change their catch-up contributions at any time as long as they do not exceed the annual catch-up contribution limit. Open season dates do not apply to catch-up contribution elections.

Employees are encouraged to use Employee Express to make their TSP catch-up contributions election. TSP has issued a new form, TSP-1-C, Catch-up Contribution Elections, that employees may submit to their human resources office to elect to participate in the catch-up contribution program. This form is available on the TSP Web site at <http://www.tsp.gov>.

For additional information about the TSP catch-up contribution program, see TSP Bulletin 03-4, available at <http://www.tsp.gov/cgi-bin/byteserver.cgi/bulletins/03-4.pdf>.

J U L Y 1 8 , 2 0 0 3

Tongass and Chugach Exemptions to the Roadless Rule

The Forest Service published two notices in the Federal Register on July 15, 2003, under the terms of the settlement agreement of the Alaska Roadless lawsuit: (1) a proposed rule to exempt the Tongass National Forest from the roadless rule until rulemaking process for any permanent amendments to roadless rule can be completed, and (2) an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to exempt both the Tongass and Chugach National Forests in Alaska from the application of the roadless rule permanently. The settlement agreement specifies a 30-day notice and comment period on both proposed actions.

MOU Signing Helps Preserve Forest Service History



MOU signing ceremony. Pictured left to right, Dave Stack, NMFSH vice president; Brad Powell, R-1 regional forester; Jack Fisher, NMFSH board member; Bottom, Dale Bosworth, Forest Service chief; Gary Brown, NMFSH former president.

The National Museum of Forest Service History (NMFSH) and the USDA Forest Service signed a national memorandum of understanding to increase cooperation between the two organizations to preserve and interpret the rich history of the Forest Service. Chief Dale Bosworth and former NMFSH President Gary Brown signed the MOU on June 16, 2003, in Missoula, MT.

The museum's Executive Director Frank McKinney said, "With the signing of this document, we now have a formal relationship with the Forest Service. The MOU formalizes a relationship between the museum and the Federal agency for the purposes of artifact collection and interpretation, program implementation, and technical assistance on a national level."

The NMFSH is a nonprofit organization located in Missoula, MT. The museum's purpose is to preserve and interpret the history of the USDA Forest Service, to educate the public about the history of the agency and its role in the history of conservation in the United States, and to present this information with integrity.

Smokey Vet Passes Away



Dr. E.J. Smith treats the burned bear cub found in the Gap Fire in 1950.

Dr. Edwin James (E.J.) Smith, 87, who had a veterinary practice in Santa Fe, New Mexico, for more than three decades, died June 29, 2003, in Pueblo, CO. A native of Colorado, Smith came to Santa Fe in 1946 and purchased what became the Smith Veterinary Hospital, which he operated until his retirement in 1978. Smokey Bear was Dr. Smith's most famous patient; he even visited Smokey in Washington, DC. Dr. Smith will long be remembered for his efforts to bring to life the internationally recognized national living symbol for fire prevention.

In 1950, a badly burned bear cub found desperately clinging to a charred tree, was rescued by firefighters in the Gap Fire near Capitan, NM, on the Lincoln National Forest. The cub was transported to a ranger station to treat his wounds. The firefighters called the cub "Smokey," after the original character that appeared in early fire prevention poster campaigns. A local rancher agreed to take the now orphaned cub home. A New Mexico Department of Game and Fish Ranger heard about Smokey and drove to the rancher's home to retrieve him. The cub needed veterinary aid and was flown to Santa Fe, where the burns were treated and bandaged by Dr. E.J. Smith, one of the few veterinarians in New Mexico at that time. And the rest, as they say, is history.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

Managing Off-Highway Vehicle Use

The off-highway vehicle issue is not about banning OHV use from national forest land. OHV use is perfectly legitimate in some areas, and I support it.

The issue is about management of OHV use. We need to improve our management so we get responsible recreational use based on sound outdoor ethics.

We already do this in some places. Some forests are focusing on better inventory and maps, more public involvement, clearer standards and guides in forest plans, clearer signage, and better communication. Others have mobilized hundreds of OHV volunteers for patrolling, protecting resources, and informing the public. Several forests have teamed up with local OHV clubs or groups to build and maintain roads, trails, berms, bridges, and culverts for designated use by motorized vehicles.

We have models of recreation and travel management out there that work. Let's look to these for guidance.

Dale N. Bosworth

Chief

Job Corps Work Stays In House

By Bobbie Nixon, Jr., Office of Communications, Washington Office

The Forest Service, after completing 6 of 18 competitive sourcing studies on Job Corps Centers on July 11, kept nearly 300 jobs in house. An independent review determined the agency should retain work at six Job Corps Centers:

Anaconda and Trapper Creek in Montana, Frenchburg and Pine Knot in Kentucky, Lyndon B. Johnson in North Carolina, and Timber Lake in Oregon.

"This is good news for employees at these centers," said Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth. "We still have a long way to go with our Competitive Sourcing studies, but this is a useful early result. It shows our commitment to improving organizational efficiency."

The decision was announced after the Forest Service received approval from the OMB and the USDA to use the original streamlined study methods that were planned for the Job Corps Center studies earlier this year. New study guidance, part of a Revised A-76 Circular issued in May, could have significantly changed the procedures for these studies.

Original study methods allowed reviewers to consider an in-house cost advantage requiring potential contractors to beat the government's proposal by 10 percent to be awarded the work. They also allowed a comparison of the Forest Service's in-house cost estimate to a range of four comparable contracts. OMB's Revised A-76 Circular eliminated these provisions, and altered procedures for streamlined competitions.

Forest Service Mourns Loss of Employees

Gwen Saltis, Leader of Jordan Hot Springs Trail Crew



Gwen Saltis

Early Saturday morning, July 19, 2003, while Inyo National Forest employee Gwen Saltis was sleeping at her work site, a large tree fell across her tent, killing her. Ms. Saltis had been leading the Jordan Hot Springs Trail Crew engaged in post-McNally Fire trail restoration work. The base camp location was at Jordan Hot Springs in the Golden Trout Wilderness of the Inyo National Forest.

Gwen had been employed by the Inyo National Forest for the past 6 years and loved building trails and working to make the forest more enjoyable for others. Friend Beth Maguire wrote: "It's comforting to know that she left this world doing something that she loved to do and felt so strongly about." She enjoyed outdoor life to its fullest. Camping, hiking, snowboarding, biking, soccer, and cooking her special meals were some of her favorite activities.

Gwen was described as an extremely hard-working and committed employee. It was said that her family lost a glowing flame around which they have always gathered; and the world lost someone who shared her passion for life with everyone she encountered. Inyo Trails Coordinator Marty Hornick wrote: "Gwen was one of those rare people who just exuded life and warmth in every way. Her radiant smile and twinkling—almost mischievous—eyes would draw others toward her." Gwen's crew members lost a fantastic leader, role model, and friend. Gwen is survived by her parents, two sisters, one brother, and special companion Patrick Wolford.

Cramer Fire Takes Two Firefighters' Lives

Two firefighters received fatal injuries while working on the Cramer Fire on the Salmon-Challis National Forest in Idaho, on Tuesday, July 22, 2003. The firefighters were overrun by flames after rappelling to the ground from a helicopter to clear a helicopter landing zone. Jeff Allen, 24, of Salmon, ID, and Shane Heath, 22, of Idaho's Treasure Valley, will be sorely missed.

Jeff Allen, 24, of Salmon, Idaho



Jeff Allen

Jeff had been a seasonal firefighter for the Forest Service since 1999. He started working on the Salmon-Challis National Forest on the thinning crew on the Salmon/Colbalt Ranger District in 1998. The next year he went to work with the helitack crew in Indianola, near North Fork, ID. Jeff successfully fought the devastating year 2000 fires in the Salmon-Challis National Forest. Jeff was a student at Boise State University, where he was majoring in general business. Jeff is survived by his parents, Diz and Bill Allen of Salmon, and a brother Ryan, of Boise.

Shane Heath, 22, of Idaho's Treasure Valley

Shane was a Forest Service wildland firefighter for 4 years. Born and raised on a farm in the Treasure Valley area of Idaho, he always wanted to be a helicopter pilot, loved firefighting, and enjoyed sawyer work. He pursued his loves and interests through his work as a Forest Service seasonal firefighter. Shane worked in the Bitterroot and Salmon-Challis National Forests before taking on his most recent assignment with the Indianola helitack crew near North Fork, Idaho. Shane was a student at Boise State University. He is survived by his parents, Steve and Jody Heath, a brother Zack, and a sister Lacey.



Shane Heath

AUGUST 29, 2003

Eight Firefighter Fatalities

Eight firefighters died on Sunday, August 24, 2003, as a result of a vehicle accident west of Vale, OR. All members of a First Strike Environmental fire crew, they were returning from a fire on the Boise National Forest in Idaho. The victims were identified as Rick Ruiz, 19, Leland Price, Jr., 27, and Jesse James, 22, all from Roseburg, OR; David Hammer, 38, and Richard B. Moore II, 21, both from Portland, OR; Mark Ransdell, 23, and Paul Gibson, 25, both from Myrtle Creek, OR; and Jeff Hengel, 21, from Sutherlin, OR.

SEPTEMBER 12, 2003

GAO Audit Findings From Forest Service Purchase Card Program

By Laurie Lewandowski, Acquisition Management Staff, Washington Office

The General Accounting Office (GAO) completed an audit of the Forest Service purchase card program. They found that internal control weaknesses resulted in instances of improper, wasteful, and questionable purchases. Considering these findings, it is especially important that Forest Service employees use their purchase cards properly.

More than 10,000 Forest Service employees used the purchase card, a VISA card issued by Bank of America, to acquire goods and services. Because so many employees handled their own procurements, the number of procurement personnel was reduced by approximately 25 percent. Most of these cardholders were "micropurchasers," meaning that each individual transaction they made could not exceed \$2,500. In FY 2002, Forest Service cardholders spent nearly \$300 million, approximately one-quarter of the total Forest Service dollars spent on procurements, using the purchase card. Because of abuses found by the GAO, emphasis on the oversight of the purchase card program increased. The GAO

recently completed an audit of the USDA that focused exclusively on the Forest Service. Regions began actively monitoring and auditing purchase card transactions for fraud, waste, and abuse. The USDA changed regulations to require cardholders' supervisors to review transactions at least quarterly.

S E P T E M B E R 2 6 , 2 0 0 3

M E S S A G E F R O M T H E C H I E F

Taking Responsibility for Financial Management

We continue to face challenges in financial management. Wherever we are in the organization, each and every one of us has financial management responsibilities, whether it is proper use of a government credit card, budget execution, documenting and recording accomplishments properly, or the overall leadership role of line officers. We all need to understand the budget process, how government accounting works, how to use financial management in decisionmaking, and how we are organized to carry out our financial management responsibilities.

In 2004, the office of the Chief Financial Officer will offer a financial management course for line officers, in addition to providing other ongoing financial management training. I encourage you to participate.

Dale N. Bosworth
Chief

From Abandoned Truck to Legendary Government Vehicle

Written by Matt Rippey, Public Affairs Intern, Kaibab National Forest

Researched by Dana Burgess, Public Affairs Intern, Kaibab National Forest

Left at the bottom of Rattlesnake Canyon in the Galiuro Mountains of southern Arizona, a 1925 Dodge Brothers truck owned by the Forest Service sat rusting away for more than 30 years. In the mid-1960s, the truck came out of a long hibernation when two Forest Service employees—Cecil Sims and Charles Ames—dismantled it and had it flown out of the canyon to be rebuilt in Albuquerque.

The "Old Dodge" is once again undergoing changes. The truck's caretaker, Forest Service employee Tom Hooker, wants to have the vehicle repainted in addition to the yearly maintenance required to keep the truck in good condition. It has been several decades since the 1925 truck has had a new paint job, and Hooker said he needs all the help he can get for the project. Hooker, who has been the vehicle's caretaker since the early 1970s, said he would appreciate any loaned equipment or donated money.



The "Old Dodge"

Hooker noted that maintaining this vehicle is a critical factor in helping Smokey Bear bring his message of fire prevention to the West. Ever since the truck was pulled from Rattlesnake Canyon and reassembled, it has carried Smokey Bear and at least four Forest Service Chiefs on parade routes throughout many western States. “The Dodge Brothers truck is the oldest Forest Service vehicle in the country,” said Hooker, who also serves as the forest fleet manager for the Kaibab National Forest. “This vehicle has driven Smokey Bear around more times than any other government automobile, and it has been to places like New Mexico, Wyoming, Idaho, Colorado, and all over Arizona.”

The historical vehicle was abandoned at the bottom of Rattlesnake Canyon by forest ranger J.W. Girdner, in a successful bid to obtain a shiny, new Forest Service truck. Since the 1925 truck’s rebirth, a few mechanics and Forest Service employees, including Hooker, Fred “Perico” Avila, and Robert “Doc” Docherty, have made it a priority to keep the legendary vehicle in top condition. “When I first acquired the vehicle, I worked on the woodwork and the spokes, which were wooden,” Hooker said. “I had help from two other employees—Perico and Doc. Together we stripped down the vehicle, sandblasted it, refinished it, did the pinstriping, and put the logo on the door.” He added with a laugh, “I think the vehicle is more putty than metal.”

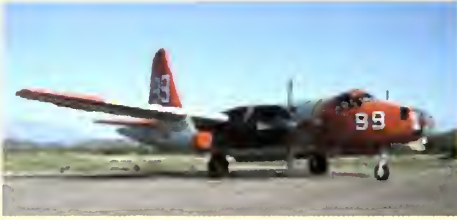
Since then, the truck has been worked on and annually inspected at a mechanic’s shop in Flagstaff. There, a family of mechanics, including Ron Stump, a third-generation mechanic who learned most of his knowledge about the 1925 truck from his father, has attended to the vehicle. The once-a-year checkup allows Forest Service management to breathe a little easier when parade coordinators and other event planners call on the “Old Dodge” to be part of festivities. “The truck has become really famous,” Hooker said. “It is often one of the main attractions at special events.”

Hooker warned that the truck’s age and condition should be taken into consideration, however, before sending it out to just any event. The vehicle must be properly inspected before it is dispatched to parades, fairs, or other activities. The 1925 truck has not always required only fine-tuning; almost everything on the vehicle has been worked on since it was brought back to life in the mid-1960s. Everything, from the water pump to the carburetor and from the oil pump to the rear axle hubs, has been replaced over the years.

Unfortunately, while the vehicle runs well, its visual appeal has started to decline from years of wear and tear. Hooker would like to get the repainting finished as soon as possible, but this requires time and money—two things not readily available to him at the moment.

To learn more about the Dodge Brothers truck or to help in the planned repainting effort, call Tom Hooker at 928-635-8293.

Fatal Airtanker Crash in California



On October 3, 2003, at approximately 11:30 a.m., Airtanker 99 went down in the San Bernardino National Forest in California, about 8 miles northeast of the San Bernardino Airtanker Base. The two crew members from the Minden Air Corporation (Nevada) did not survive. The P-2V Type II tanker was returning from the Poplar Complex in Arizona to the San Bernardino Airtanker base. The National Transportation Safety Board led the investigation into the accident. According to the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC), this was the eighth airtanker crash in the United States in the past decade. Sixteen people have died in these crashes.

Forest Service Fares Well in First Round of Competitive Sourcing Studies

By Bobbie Mixon, Jr., Office of Communication, Washington Office

The Forest Service fared well in its first round of competitive sourcing studies, retaining work in 155 of 166 completed competitions. (*See Table 1 for details.*)

"These results demonstrate that a lot of our programs are cost effective, and the rate of jobs kept in house demonstrates that applying the competitive sourcing tools has not led to the large loss of jobs as some have alleged," said Tom Mills, Forest Service Deputy Chief for Business Operations.

Competitive sourcing is one of five President's Management Agenda initiatives. It provides a tool to improve our cost effectiveness and efficiency. The process involves studying specific kinds of work performed by the Forest Service to determine whether a public or private source would be most effective at performing that work.

The Forest Service's FY 2003 competitive sourcing study results were based on agencywide fleet, road, building, and grounds maintenance studies. In addition, 18 Job Corps Center studies were included along with the direct conversion of the Content Analysis Team. According to the agency's competitive sourcing program managers, the results showed that Forest Service employees were able to perform the work at a lower cost than were contractors in most work activities studied to date.

For those 11 studies in which the Forest Service program was not the most cost effective, steps were under way to go through the procurement process to award a contract to another provider to accomplish the work under Forest Service oversight. Of the 11 studies, 5 were direct conversions to contract; the other 6 were streamlined or express studies.

The FY 2003 competitive sourcing plan called for a total of 170 studies, of which 147 were maintenance studies. These studies were designed to compare in-house costs for road, building and ground, fleet, and trail maintenance functions with the private sector. The remaining studies were 18 Job Corps center studies,

one large nationwide IT infrastructure study, and the Content Analysis Team. This was in addition to the End User Support Center study (150 FTEs) completed in FY 2002. In all, competitions for 2349 FTEs were studied in FY 2003.

The current goal is to conduct competitive sourcing studies on 50 percent of all the ‘not inherently governmental FTEs,” said Mills. “That means that the Forest Service would eventually study a little more than 10,000 FTEs. That’s about one-third of the workforce.”

Competitive sourcing benchmarks agreed to by the USDA and the OMB called for a study of about 2,000 FTEs per year, or only approximately 5 percent of the Forest Service’s total FTE count each year. “A rigorous study of the cost effectiveness of about 5 percent of our programs per year appears to be a reasonable rate to fulfill our responsibility to deliver cost effective programs with the tax payers’ dollars,” Mills said.

Table 1. FY 2003 Forest Service Competitive Sourcing Studies

| | Total Number of Studies | Number of Completed Studies | Number of Studies To Remain In House | Number of Studies To Private Sector | Percent of In-House Studies Based on Completed Studies |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| R-1 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 83 |
| R-2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | -- | 100 |
| R-3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | -- | 100 |
| R-4 | 7 | 7 | 7 | -- | 100 |
| R-5 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 83 |
| R-6/ PNW | 48 | 48 | 41 | 7 | 85 |
| R-8 | 40 | 40 | 40 | -- | 100 |
| R-9 | 15 | 15 | 15 | -- | 100 |
| R-10 | 4 | 3 | 3 | -- | 100 |
| FPL | 1 | 1 | 1 | -- | 100 |
| NC | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 50 |
| NE/NA | 2 | 2 | 2 | -- | 100 |
| PSW | 1 | 1 | 1 | -- | 100 |
| RMRS | 8 | 8 | 8 | -- | 100 |
| SRS | 1 | 1 | 1 | -- | 100 |
| Maintenance | | | | | |
| Total | 150 | 147 | 137 | 10 | 93% |
| Job Corps | 18 | 18 | 18 | 0 | 100 |
| IT Study | 1 | Not complete | -- | -- | -- |
| CAT | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Total | 170 | 166 | 155 | 11 | 93% |

Distinguished Service in Aviation Safety



Dr. Tony Kern

The Aviation Week and Space Technology Distinguished Service Award for Aviation Safety was presented to Dr. Tony Kern at a ceremony in Washington, DC, in November 2003 at the National Air and Space Museum.

Kern served in the U.S. Air Force for 20 years, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel in 2000. He was a KC-135 airtanker command pilot and flight instructor and piloted the supersonic B-1B bomber. Kern designed many aviation education and training programs and lectured and consulted internationally on human factors in aviation and pilot accountability. He has authored five books and consulted on many more. His book *Redefining Airmanship* was translated into many languages, including Russian and Spanish. It is used as a primary text in aviation training programs around the world.

From 2000 to 2001, Kern served as the Forest Service National Aviation Safety and Training Manager at NIFC in Boise, ID. He is presently the Assistant Director for Fire and Aviation Management in the WO. In that capacity, Kern wrote the decision memo for the Chief proposing the grounding of nine contracted firefighting airtankers after two airtankers, a C-130A and PB4Y2, experienced wing separation in flight resulting in the deaths of five aviators. He also worked cooperatively with other firefighting agencies to restrict the flight operations for remaining aircrafts used during the 2002 wildland fire season. In addition, Kern supported the decision not to contract for the C-130A and the PB4Y2 aircraft for aerial firefighting in the future. This was a controversial decision, with concerns expressed from members of the U.S. Congress, other government agencies, private contractors, and some U.S. Forest Service officials. The decision to ground the aircraft in 2002 and to reject the use of the two models in the future, may have saved other crew members lives last year and may prevent similar accidents in the future.

Kern also assembled the Blue Ribbon Panel on Aerial Firefighting that the Chief of the Forest Service and the Director of the BLM chartered. This panel examined the USDA Forest Service and BLM aviation programs and presented a blueprint for a safer, more effective aerial firefighting program through a series of findings. Kern's actions greatly advanced aviation safety in the world of aviation firefighting operations.

Kern holds masters' degrees in public administration and military history and a doctorate in higher education. Kern's honors include an award for Research Excellence from the U.S. Air Force in 2002 and the Aviation Laurel Award for Government Program Management from Aviation Week and Space Technology in 2002.

N O V E M B E R 1 4 , 2 0 0 3

Forest Service Implements New National Blueprint for Recreation Fees

By Jane Knowlton, Office of Communication, Washington Office

As part of the Recreational Fee Demonstration (Fee Demo) Program, the Forest Service completed work with field offices and other participating Federal agencies to create a National Blueprint for Recreation Fees in response to public complaints and congressional concerns over multiple fees and

program inconsistencies. The Forest Service implemented the plan to improve consistency and accountability for this beneficial recreation program.

“Our goal is to use almost all of the Fee Demo revenues to implement on-the-ground improvements at recreation sites,” said Gail van der Bie, Assistant Director for Facilities and Services for the Recreation, Heritage, and Wilderness Resources Staff. “We’ve achieved many accomplishments to date with these revenues, including reductions in deferred maintenance backlogs and vandalism rates, improved condition of recreation facilities and trails, increased agency field presence, and heightened visitor safety.”

“Enhanced visitor services—such as improved interpretive services, reservation systems, and expanded hours at information contact points—are the direct result of the fee demonstration program,” she said. “Volunteer projects also utilize fee demo receipts to leverage the fee dollar.”

Fee Demo was authorized in 1996 for four Federal land management agencies—the Forest Service, the NPS, the BLM, and the USFWS—to “demonstrate the feasibility of user-generated cost recovery for the operation and maintenance of recreation areas or sites and habitat enhancement projects on Federal lands.” Originally designed as a 3-year test program, Congress has extended the program several times, most recently determining it to expire on December 31, 2005.

Agencies were authorized to test various methods for charging recreation fees to provide funds necessary to maintain and enhance facilities. Critical to public support, the primary program benefit involved the return of at least 80 percent of the funds (by law) to the site where it is collected for projects and services. The Forest Service limited Washington, DC, use of the funds so that an average of 92 percent of revenue collected is returned to the field.

The Forest Service has collected approximately \$123.7 million in revenue since the program’s inception in 1996. For FY 2002, the agency collected \$37.4 million nationwide. The total cost to collect fees under the Fee Demo Program in FY 2002 was \$5.9 million, or approximately 16.3 percent of gross revenue. Collections continue to rise as visitors become aware of the program.

Local decisions on how revenue is spent are guided by public involvement, project priorities, forest planning guidelines, national priorities, the need to address critical deferred maintenance, or community assessments. Business and communication plans guide all Fee Demo projects.



Through the Recreational Fee Demonstration Program, visitors enjoy a tour of prehistoric ruins at Palatki on the Coconino National Forest in Arizona.

N O V E M B E R 2 8 , 2 0 0 3

M E S S A G E F R O M T H E C H I E F

Happy Holidays

All of us in the Chief’s Office want to wish you and your families a happy Thanksgiving and all the best for the holiday season ahead.

It is a time to reflect on the past year and to look ahead. Like most recent years, 2003 was incredibly busy and challenging. Among other things, we assisted with the Columbia space shuttle recovery effort; responded to the Newcastle

chicken disease emergency; made good headway on the Healthy Forests Initiative; worked through another busy fire year; implemented several Presidential Management Initiatives, such as competitive sourcing; and made another concerted effort to obtain a clean financial audit.

As in other years, 2003 also saw tremendous day-to-day accomplishments that are vital to our mission—like keeping campgrounds and picnic areas open; making sure people get paid and their travel expenses reimbursed; issuing and administering contracts; processing personnel actions; managing grazing allotments, wildernesses, and other areas; conducting research; and connecting with States and communities through our State and private programs and with other countries through international outreach and assistance. These and all the other things you do are done so well that they are often just taken for granted, but they would certainly be greatly missed if you suddenly stopped doing them.

Sally and I are deeply grateful to all of you. Your high level of accomplishment and the quality of your work set the Forest Service apart.

Thank you! Once again, all the best to you during this holiday season! We extend to you and yours our best wishes for a great new year.

Dale N. Bosworth

Chief

Sally Collins, Associate

Chief

National Gifford Pinchot Excellence in Interpretation and Conservation Education Award Presented

By Kristen Nelson, National Program Manager, Interpretive Services, Washington Office

Julie Schreck, the conservation education coordinator for the Bitterroot National Forest, was this year's recipient of the national Gifford Pinchot Excellence in Interpretation and Conservation Education Award. Julie was recognized for her leadership and innovation in conducting conservation education programs, forming new community partnerships, and her outreach to new audiences. Julie's energy, enthusiasm, and outstanding collaborative attitude have made a difference in lives of Bitterroot Valley residents as well as in the lives of her co-workers.

Julie also worked closely with the regional Forest Leadership Team to identify emerging issues. Because of the forest fires of 2000, she integrated wildfire issues into conservation education issues. Julie's efforts focused on technology, partnering, and intensive public engagement to provide education and interpretive programs to meet community needs and agency goals.

Upon receiving the award, Julie said, "Conservation education is not a one-person show—it takes an entire community of passionate and dedicated folks to deliver and support relevant and exciting education programs." The Forest Service gave its national award during an interagency award ceremony as part of the National Association for Interpretation's conference in Sparks, NV.



Pictured left to right, Kristen Nelson; Denver James, conservation education coordinator; Julie Schreck; and Marline Finley, R-5 director of recreation.

The following were the regional award recipients:

- **Karen Malis-Clark**, Coconino National Forest, Arizona, for her leadership in developing a variety of programs and partnerships serving local schools and regional communities.
- **Ken Waugh**, Boise National Forest, Idaho, for the quality interpretive exhibits and brochures he designed that encourage visitors and OHV users to respect other recreation users and protect the natural and heritage resources of the forest.
- **Marianne Emmendorfer**, Sequoia National Forest, California, for her expertise in designing exhibits, interpretive signs, and brochures that explain the historical and culturally rich history along with the ecological features of the Giant Sequoias groves.
- **Todd Cullings**, Gifford Pinchot National Forest, Washington, for his creativity and sustained dedication to quality public service and application of interpretive principles, especially relevant thematic messages.
- **Jim Caldwell**, Kisatchie National Forest, Louisiana, for his outstanding work in interpretation and education and his willingness to serve others, as evidenced by his work on the Columbia shuttle recovery effort.
- **Janel Crooks**, Hiawatha National Forest, Michigan, for her innovation and collaboration with local tribes, universities, businesses, and schools resulting in high-quality interpretation and educational programming.
- **Victoria Evans**, Morgantown Field Office, Northeast Area State and Private Forestry, West Virginia, for her significant role in promoting nationally recognized programs such as Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl and for using a variety of media and technologies to reach people in rural and urban settings.
- **Nita Nettleton**, Tongass National Forest, Alaska, for her exceptional management of the complex and highly visible Tongass Marine Highway Interpretive Program and the Juneau Ranger District Conservation Education Program.



*In addition to the national award, Marlene Finley presented each of the nine regional nominees their regional award and a commemorative edition of Gifford Pinchot's book, *Breaking New Ground*, signed by Chief Bosworth. These employees were also acknowledged for their personal contributions toward making complex natural and cultural resources issues more understandable, relevant, and enjoyable.*

Range Conservationists Receive John R. McGuire Award

On October 22 in Denver, CO, Floyd Reed and Dave Bradford, both of the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests, received the John R. McGuire Award for their "extraordinary accomplishments" resulting in improved range, forest, and watershed conditions."

Both employees serve as "range conservationists." They launched a far-reaching educational program on sound range management for diverse interest groups. Reed is assigned to the Delta office, and Bradford to the Paonia office.

"Floyd and Dave deserve this recognition because they have made outstanding contributions to the range program here and throughout the Western United States," said Forest Supervisor Bob Storch.

The award was presented to the employees by Chief of the Forest Service Dale Bosworth and Rocky Mountain Regional Forester Rick Cables. Retiree Chuck Hendricks represented the National Association of Forest Service Retirees for the presentation.



Pictured left to right, Regional Forester Rick Cables, Forest Service retiree Chuck Hendricks, Floyd Reed, Dave Bradford, Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth.

The award is sponsored by the National Association of Forest Service Retirees, an organization dedicated to the promotion of the ideals and principles of natural resource conservation, and is presented to deserving employees as they are identified by the Association. John R. McGuire was the 10th Chief of the Forest Service, serving from 1972 to 1979.

D E C E M B E R 1 2 , 2 0 0 3

M E S S A G E F R O M T H E C H I E F
Implementing the Healthy Forests Restoration Act

On December 3, 2003, President Bush signed the “Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003.” We have come a long way in just a few years since we first started focusing on process gridlock in 2001. The new legislation, together with the new categorical exclusions and our other administrative actions, gives us a fairly complete set of tools for fuels reduction and forest health treatments.

Now we need to deliver. We need to move out quickly yet carefully as we implement projects using the new tools. Please read the bill and start planning for projects in threatened areas. An interdeputy team has been formed to provide field guidance.

I’m excited about the new opportunities we have to do what we all know the land needs. I look forward to getting out to see the results on the ground and hearing how you are using the new tools.

It has been a tremendous team effort, and I want to personally thank everyone who helped get us where we are today.

Dale N. Bosworth
Chief

President Bush Signs Healthy Forests Restoration Act

On November 21, 2003, Congress made a strong bipartisan commitment to decrease the risk of catastrophic wildland fires to communities and restore our Nation’s forest and rangelands by passing HR 1904, the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003. The Act provides the critical tools called for in President Bush’s Healthy Forests Initiative to more effectively reduce wildfire risks and improve forest health.

Title 1 of the legislation provides authority and direction to reduce wildland fire risk to communities, municipal water supplies, and other at-risk Federal lands through a collaborative process of planning, prioritizing, and implementing hazardous fuel reduction projects on Federal land. The title authorizes \$760 million annually.

- Specifically, the legislation endorses the following policies or actions:
1. Supports hazardous fuel reduction through various methods, including thinning and prescribed fire on up to 20 million acres of Federal land.

2. States that any activity in old growth stands must fully maintain or contribute toward maintaining the integrity of old growth stands according to forest type.
3. Focuses tree removal activities outside old growth acres on small diameter trees and leaves larger trees, as appropriate, for the forest type to promote fire-resistant forests.
4. Instructs the Secretaries to develop project priorities considering recommendations from community wildfire protection plans, and directs overall that not less than 50 percent of the funds allocated for projects be used in the wildland urban interface.
5. Limits the number of alternatives that must be developed under NEPA and requires the Secretaries to engage in active public involvement.
6. Directs the Secretary of Agriculture to promulgate interim final regulations within 30 days after enactment to establish a predecisional administrative review process. This will serve as the sole means for administratively challenging a project decision under this act.
7. Requires courts to balance the short- and long-term effects of completing the project against the short- and long-term effects of not carrying out the project.
8. Provides grant programs to States, tribes, small communities, and individuals for projects consistent with watershed restoration, biomass utilization, and conservation.
9. Authorizes Forest Service Research and Development to conduct assessments on Federal lands at risk with the new procedures under NEPA on up to 1,000 acres.
10. Addresses the need for an early warning system for potential threats to forests from insects, disease, fire, and weather-related risks to increase the likelihood of successful prevention and treatment.



President George W. Bush signs the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 at the Department of Agriculture on December 3, 2003.

Steve Kratville Receives "Spirit of Collaboration" Award

Steve Kratville, Partnership Coordinator for the Northern Region, received the National Forest Foundation's (NFF's) first annual "Spirit of Collaboration Award." The award is presented to a Forest Service employee who embodies the true spirit of collaboration; an individual who seeks creative solutions to enhancing partnerships and strives to make connections that result in a more productive alliance.

Steve received the honor for his dedication in creating effective partnerships in the agency and with the agency's external partners. Through his creativity and understanding, Steve has been instrumental in helping the NFF solidify its partnership with the Forest Service. The NFF presented the award to Steve at its holiday reception in Washington, DC, on December 3, 2003.

NFF has initiated a new annual awards program to recognize a Forest Service employee, a conservation leader, and a partner organization each year for their contributions to the NFF Mission.

For more information on these awards, visit <http://www.natlforests.org>.

A Commitment to Working Together



Pictured left to right, William Mehojah, Bureau of Indian Affairs Deputy Director; Steve Williams, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director; Fran Mainella, National Park Service Director; Dale Bosworth, Forest Service Chief.

On November 18, 2003, in Los Angeles, Chief Bosworth joined leaders of the NPS, BLM, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, USFWS, Bureau of Reclamation, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in signing a pledge of partnership at the “Joint Ventures: Partners in Stewardship Conference.” By doing so, Bosworth and each of the other agency leaders committed to use the spirit of collaboration as a foundation for thriving public/private partnerships in the future.

Later that day, at listening sessions with Forest Service employees and partners, Chief Bosworth underscored the importance of his commitment by saying: “We must spend more time up front working with the public in the planning of our programs and projects to make working in partnerships a part of our core business.”

The partnership pledge focuses on successful partnering through creating a nationwide network of public places. It also calls for enhancing efficiency in service delivery, , engaging new resources in problem solving, sharing skills and knowledge, and developing joint initiatives that increase awareness and enjoyment of public lands with emphasis on our youth. As a direct result of this pledge, a partnership roundtable, with the goal of a seamless system of service to the public, has been formed that has already started meeting to work on common issues.

“Joint Ventures: Partners in Stewardship” provided more than 1,600 attendees from the public and private sector with a unique opportunity to learn what makes partnerships work, hear success stories, and gain skills to bring back to their organizations.

To learn more about the conference, read conference session reports, and view plenary sessions, visit <http://www.partnerships2003.org>. For additional information on the conference, call the Forest Service National Partnership Office at 202-205-1072.

DECEMBER 19, 2003

Forest Service Plans for 2005 Centennial

The Forest Service celebrates 100 years of service in 2005. At the national level, planned activities and events for the Centennial include participation in the Smithsonian Institution’s Folklife Festival, a documentary history of the agency in conjunction with Portland (Oregon) Public Broadcasting, outreach activities through the arts and humanities in partnership with the National Endowments for the Arts and for the Humanities, and a possible Centennial Congress modeled after the 1905 Forestry Congress. Representatives from Forest Service regions, research stations, and the WO will continue planning efforts for these and other national activities, discussing plans at regional and local levels, and researching ways in which to involve local communities and partners in celebrations.

Agency Working Toward National OHV Policy for Field Implementation

By Jane Knowlton, Office of Communication, Washington Office



When Chief Dale Bosworth outlined his “Four Threats,” unmanaged recreation was one of the primary concerns facing the Nation’s forest and grasslands today, particularly as it relates to OHV use on Forest Service-managed lands.

Since then, two agency teams have been working to address this issue, with the goal of developing a new national OHV policy for field use in determining which roads, trails, and areas will be designated for OHV use. The initiative will involve policy changes to Federal regulations, with a draft rule scheduled for publication in the Federal Register by early 2004, followed by a public comment period.

Jack Troyer, regional forester for the Intermountain Region, is heading up the National OHV Policy Team. “This is a big undertaking with many different interest groups involved. As a multiple-use agency, we want to offer the appropriate mix of programs and services to our public,” he said.

The policy team focused on three major points for a designated use system to minimize or eliminate the impacts from unmanaged OHV use:

1. Wheeled OHV travel would be allowed on designated roads, trails, and areas.
2. Cross-country travel by wheeled OHVs would generally be prohibited.
3. Decisions about which roads, trails, and areas to designate for OHV use would be made at the field level.

A number of diverse interests—including the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council, the Blue Ribbon Coalition, the National Association of Counties, and several conservation organizations—indicated their support for this direction. “Based on the outreach the regional foresters and team members have made with these and other key stakeholders on this issue, we’re getting a lot of encouragement, support, and interest in the initiative. Our goal is to involve them in the policymaking process to provide quality OHV recreational experiences while meeting our responsibility to manage and protect natural resources,” Troyer added.

An OHV Implementation Team, led by Marlene Finley, the Deputy Director for Recreation from the Pacific Southwest Region, is developing and providing tools, techniques, and best practices associated with managing OHVs to assist the field with implementing the new policy.

For more information about the policy effort, e-mail Jack Troyer at jtroyer@fs.fed.us or Mary Wagner, the WO Assistant Director for Wilderness, at mwagner@fs.fed.us. For more information on the implementation process, e-mail Marlene Finley at mfinley01@fs.fed.us.

“I encourage you to share any thoughts or suggestions you have with us as we work through this process,” Troyer said. “We are eager to provide our forest managers at the Regional, Supervisor and District Levels with the support they need to accomplish this goal.”



Tracks from unmanaged OHV use have scarred and eroded the desert hillsides in the Southwest.



**United States
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